BARG Newsletter July 2026

Ballarat Amateur Radio Group Inc. #6953T
July 2026 Monthly Newsletter

Next Meeting
11:00AM Saturday 25th July 2026
At the Airport - All Welcome

Contacting us
BARG@BARG.ORG.AU
We're on the web.
www.barg.org.au
https://twitter.com/vk3_barg
https://www.facebook.com/groups/VK3BML/

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Front Page; Cartoon Henry Moritz VK3DXC (SK)

Times and dates of nets as below

Club Nets: VHF NET: Every Tuesday Night at 8 pm on 146.750 MHz - VK3RBA

HF NET: Every Thursday Night at 8 pm on 3.608 MHz - VK3BML

6m NET: Every Tuesday Night at 8:30 pm on 53.650Mhz RX / 52.650Mhz TX - FM with a 91.5 tone - VK3RWU

LINKED REPEATERS: *The local VK3RBA-70cm repeater on Mt Buninyong is part of a network of linked repeaters covering North-Western Victoria.*
Access details for this repeater have recently changed.
For full details of this linked network and access details see https://www.qrz.com/lookup/vk3rba
You can listen to the system live http://vk3rba.dyndns.org:441/
This linked system may be accessed via IRLP node 9503

BARG inc. OFFICE BEARERS

President	Vacant	Ordinary Member	Tom George VK3DMK
Vice President	Colin Consiglio VK3NCC	Ordinary Member	Ian Fairweather VK3YFD
Secretary	Peter Westgarth VK3APW	Ordinary Member	Doug Ellery VK3DRE
Treasurer	Jeff Rickerby VK3JHR	Ordinary Member	David Martin VK3KQT
Ordinary Member	Craig Cook VK3KG	Ordinary Member	Ben Daniel VK3NRD

The VP's Ramblings

Greetings everyone,

During June I was fortunate to have spent some time in Europe, well away from the local cold weather. The heatwave that we experienced, coupled with the steep and narrow cobbled stoned streets was quite exhausting. Various experiences and discussion with travellers from other parts of the world really highlighted how good we have it in Australia.

Simple things like orderly car parking, and being able to cross at a pedestrian crossing and the cars actually stopping...and so much more... It was great to get home.

But, I'm only poking out a little bit.

Yes, the car fits here!

Keep your eyes open for news about the "Information Sharing Sessions" These will be geared towards giving people a confidence boost towards doing some Field operations.

Don't forget Membership fees are due for the 2026-2027 year. If you haven't yet renewed, please do when you have the opportunity. Fees remain the same as last year.

Your support and re commitment to membership helps us to stay strong and viable. In the meantime, you can find details on how to pay your subscription at the bottom right hand corner on this page: https://www.barg.org.au/?page_id=104

Our next General Meeting will be Saturday the 25th of July, 11AM at the club rooms. If you haven't attended for a while, perhaps this is the meeting to aim for.

The Thursday coffee morning gatherings at the club rooms continue as a vibrant gathering, a couple of hours of good company, and solving some of the world's problems.

Thought for the month: Have you popped in and supported the 2m and 80m weekly nets? We've missed you! Details on the front page of https://www.barg.org.au/.

My continued thanks to the committee and members who keep things ticking over.

Stay well, stay warm, Cheers, 73, Colin VK3NCC

The next BARG General Meeting 11:00AM Saturday 25th July 2026

The BARG Annual General Meeting 29th August 2026

FreeDV

FreeDV activities continue 80m after the BARG 80m Net.

The 80m net is every Thursday Night at 8 pm on 3.608 MHz - VK3BML
https://vu3dxr.in/getting-started-with-freedv-a-beginners-guide-to-digital-voice-on-amateur-radio

WE KNOW YOU'RE RETIRED...
...BUT THIS IS ONE BILL WORTH PAYING!
BARG MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER
The HF nets won't run themselves.
The 2 metre net controller would like a night off occasionally.
And coffee tastes better when you're still a BARG member!
If your membership renewal is still sitting under a pile of Amateur Radio magazines, now might be a good time to rescue it.
I thought I'd already paid!
You said that last year too!
At least he remembered the coffee morning.
VK3... what's the reminder again?
AMATEUR RADIO FUN, FRIENDSHIP & SERVICE
BARG BALLARAT AMATEUR RADIO GROUP
THE BARG CHECKLIST
HF NETS
2 METRE NETS
COFFEE MORNING
RENEW BARG MEMBERSHIP
RENEWAL NOTICE
DON'T DELAY!
KEEP BARG STRONG ON AIR & IN THE COMMUNITY!
COFFEE FIRST QSO LATER
BARG COFFEE CREW
MORNING COFFEE GOOD YARNS GREAT MATES
Good friends Great radio Stronger together!
QST Amateur Radio
CQ
WIRELESS
RADIO COMMUNICATION
BARG ON AIR SINCE 1930
BALLARAT AMATEUR RADIO GROUP
A friendly reminder to renew your membership.
BALLARAT BARG AMATEUR RADIO GROUP
Thanks for being part of the BARG family!
barg@barg.org.au
SEE YOU ON THE NETS (AND AT COFFEE MORNING!)

BARG Thursday Morning Coffee Club

Commences at 10:00AM at the BARG Club Rooms every Thursday.
Ballarat Airport - All Welcome.

BARG FRIDAY NIGHT DINNERS

KEEP AN EYE OUT IN GOOGLE GROUPS FOR TIMES AND BOOKINGS

VKN8 Short history of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade Medium Wave Radio system Melbourne Victoria Australia

- By Lionel VK3NM/VK6DC (SK)

VKN8 was the callsign used by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade dispatching fire trucks to various jobs on approx. 1620 KHz at the top end of the AM broadcast band with replies from the fire trucks back to base on about 83 MHz FM.

The station operated with a power output of about 1000 watts into a loaded " T " vertical with a ground plane on top of the Eastern Hill fire station just east of Melbourne CBD a quarter wave ground plane was mounted on one of the poles for reception of replies on 83 MHz from the fire trucks.

A carrier with some power supply hum was transmitted continuously 24 hours a day with a beep every 30 seconds and sometimes when you hear the base operator giving out jobs you could hear the fire truck replying due to leak through from the VHF receiver on to the MF carrier.

In the evenings VKN8 could be received interstate and I have heard the station in New Zealand, It was very rich in harmonics with the 2nd heard many miles from the station.

On Sunday mornings VKN8 conducted radio checks with all the fire trucks usually with Henry VK3EN as the operator conducting the tests, Henry designed and maintained the station for many years up his retirement, Henry is now a silent key after many years being very active on 160 metres AM.

Because of the frequency used VKN8 could be received on any AM radio including car radios and many years before Victoria Police also used MF before moving to VHF and VKN8 closed down on MF in 1972 and are now on UHF.

Article Contributed by Criag VK3KG

I switched all the labels on my wife's spice rack.
I'm not in trouble yet, but the thyme is cumin.

Stephen King has a son named Joe.
I'm not joking, but he is.

A great relationship is when your wife is by your side during the bad times.
To tell you that none of this would've happened if you had just listened to her.

Beneath the “Re-Unification Palace”

Contributor, Ian VK3YFD

Rae & I recently were in Saigon, (now called Ho Chi Minh City) and as part of a tour we were on we went to what is now called "Re-unification Palace" .

During the Vietnam War this was the residence of the President of South Vietnam.
Under the palace is a heavily reinforced concrete military bunker which was used as the President's HQ where there are several communications rooms filled with quite an array of era radio/comms equipment (see attached pics).

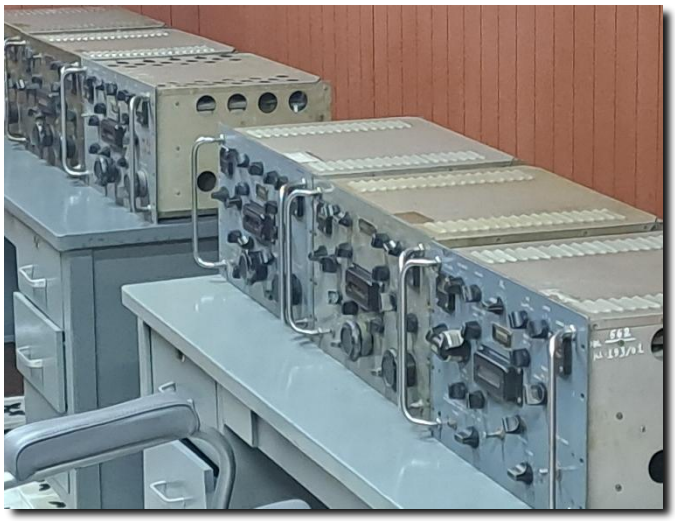
This palace was the place that media at the end of the war focussed on as the Americans abandoned Vietnam and a North Vietnam tank crashed thru the gates.

Interestingly the locals refer to the Vietnam War as the American War.

There are several sites scattered around the city featuring captured American guns, tanks, aircraft etc.

This year is the 50th anniversary of the end of the war and the whole city is adorned with very old school Communist style posters celebrating Ho Chi Minh (called Uncle Ho) and the victory over the "invader" Americans.

The following is a montage of wireless equipment on display in the bunker.



Cheers, Ian VK3YFD. Editor's Note. I would say we would have in the club, members able to identify these pieces of military wirelesses.

From the Yeovil Amateur Radio Club Facebook Page

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Contributor. Rob Micklewright G3MYM

Today, the post is about an amateur radio question.

The question is:

Why was it, that whereas today, most radio amateurs in Britain have QSOs with other radio amateurs around the world by using highly sophisticated commercially made amateur radio equipment and aerials, yet 90 years ago, in the 1930s, radio amateurs in Britain had QSOs with other radio amateurs around the world when using only a simple 1 valve homemade low power transmitter, a simple 2 valve homemade 0-V-1 receiver, and a homemade simple wire aerial?

In my view, there are 6 reasons why this was so:

(1) in the 1930s, the main mode of amateur radio communication was CW, whereas today it is SSB, and CW is about 60 times more power effective than SSB is. (See my post on here dated 27 September 2024. Alternatively, if there is sufficient interest, I can put my 27 September 2024 post on here again.)

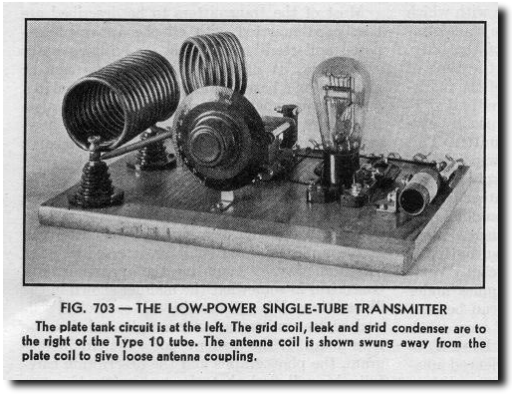


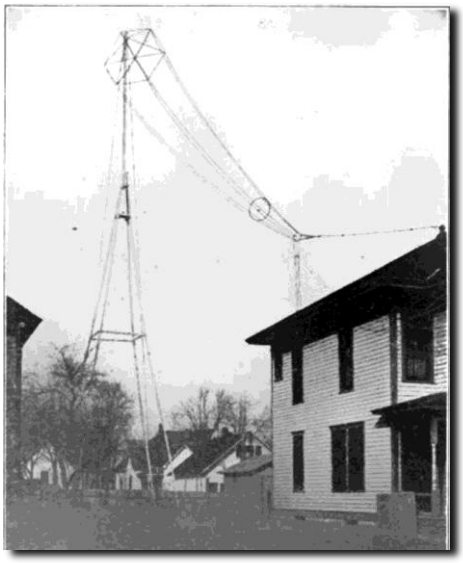
FIG. 703 — THE LOW-POWER SINGLE-TUBE TRANSMITTER

The plate tank circuit is at the left. The grid coil, leak and grid condenser are to the right of the Type 10 tube. The antenna coil is shown swung away from the plate coil to give loose antenna coupling.

(2) A simple 2 valve 0-V-1 receiver was exceptionally good at receiving weak CW signals.

(3) Irrespective of how complex or simple a transmitter is, the transmitter output is an RF voltage, and how an HF RF voltage is propagated around the world, was no different 90 years ago, to how it is today.

(4) As far as I know, in the 1930s, there were no restrictions on aerial height, so radio amateurs were able to put aerials high up in the clear, thus increasing aerial gain and minimising induction field loss.



(5) Unlike today, coax. cable, which is lossy, was not used by radio amateurs in the 1930s. Coax. cable was not used by radio amateurs in Britain until after World War 2. A popular aerial, that was used by radio amateurs in Britain in the 1930s was the Zeppelin (Zepp) aerial, which was very low loss, so practically all of the transmitter output power was radiated. Thus aerials in the 1930s were usually very efficient.

(6) In the 1930s, the dominant the HF radio noise was atmospheric radio noise, whereas today, the dominant radio noise is man made radio noise, which is usually many times greater than atmospheric radio noise. Thus, in the 1930s, less received signal power was required to obtain a given received signal to noise ratio, than is required today.

Although, since about 1970, most radio amateurs now use commercially made amateur radio equipment and aerials, low power (QRP) amateur radio still takes place; and over the years, I have had great success on 20 metres, when using a homemade CW transmitter, that had an output power of less than 1 watt (QRPp), a homemade direct conversion receiver, and a homemade horizontal wire aerial about 11 feet high.

https://www.facebook.com/groups/1844789352441533

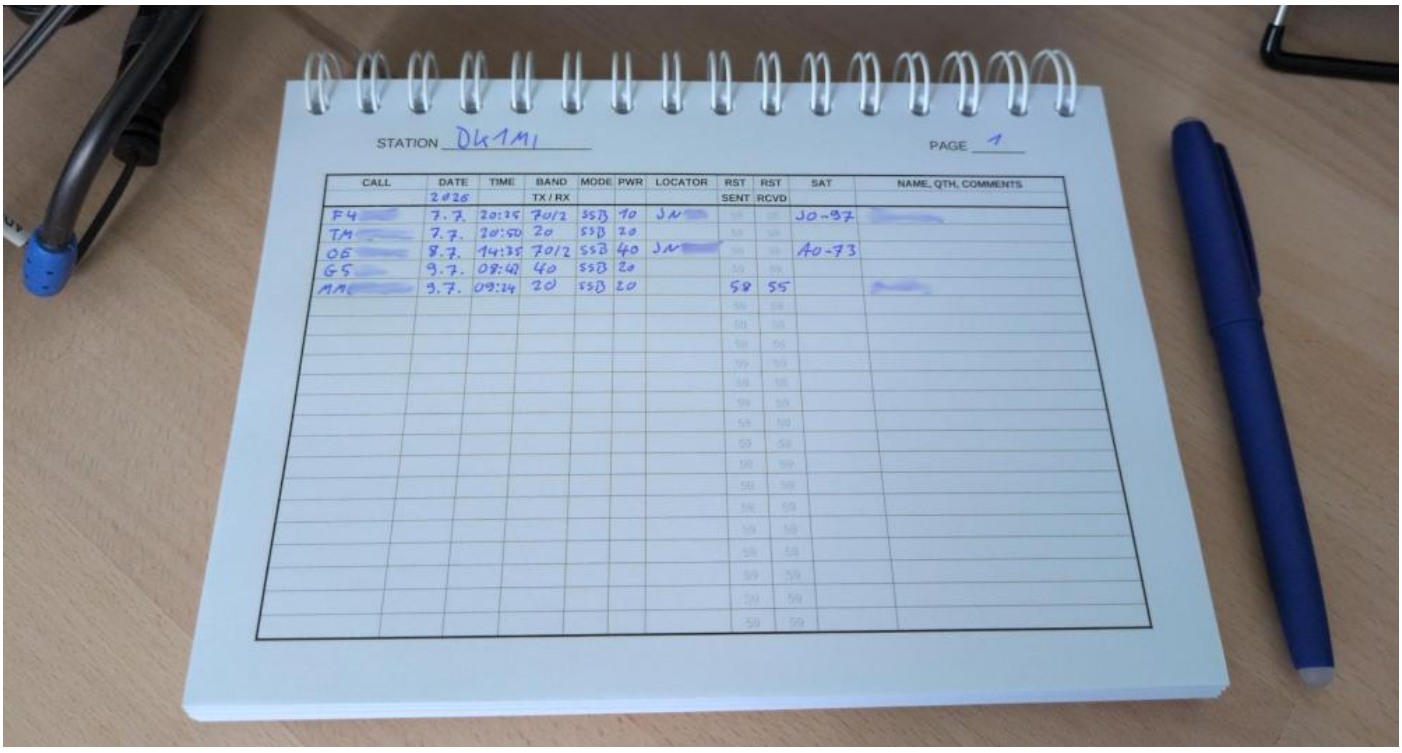
Paper Logging

From a website dedicated to Amateur Radio, owned and authored by DK1MI.
https://rz01.org/paper-logging/
Posted on 2026-07-10

As an amateur radio operator, logging and QSLing are topics that keep me busy all the time. While I recently stopped confirming my radio contacts (QSLing), it's still very important to me to log my QSOs. I've tried many different options for this and most recently used Wavelog, with which I was generally satisfied. However, I'm currently trying (not just in amateur radio) to simplify things and return to the original ways. That's why I've decided to switch to paper logging, even though the drawbacks are obvious: no automatic generation of statistics, no search options, and no quick way to tell if I've had a QSO with a station before. However, I like having the maximum freedom to enter whatever I want into the logbook, however I want. It also feels somehow more personal to log the QSOs by hand.

After testing this out for a while with an existing paper logbook, it turned out that while I like this approach, existing logbooks don't suit my needs. I make contacts both on shortwave and via satellites. For the latter, I need fields such as the locator or the name of the satellite. That's why I first designed my own logbook template in OpenOffice Calc, exported it as a PDF, and then had it bound into a ring binder by a professional printing service.

The following image shows the finished logbook with 100 pages, a transparent plastic cover page, and a black plastic page as the last page for less than 10 Euro:



My logbook design is based on the template by WD8DAS, which can be found here: https://www.wd8das.net/HamLogs/HamLogs.html

If anyone would like to use my template, they can download it from my server as an ODS file (logbook_a5.ods) or as a PDF file (logbook_a5.pdf)

Now all that's left is to see how long paper logging will keep me happy...

2026 VKFF NATIONAL GET TOGETHER ALBURY, NEW SOUTH WALES

FRIDAY 30th OCTOBER 2026, SATURDAY 31st OCTOBER 2026 SUNDAY 1st NOVEMBER 2026

FORMAL REGISTRATION FOR THIS EVENT IS NOW OPEN.

YOU MUST REGISTER TO ATTEND THIS EVENT (USE LINK BELOW)
https://www.wwffaustralia.com/2026-vkff-national-get-together.html

The 2026 VKFF National Get Together will include:

Friday evening dinner - 6.30 p.m. 30th October 2026 - Sodens Hotel

Saturday presentations - 8.30 a.m.-5.00 p.m. 31st October 2026 - Commercial Club

Saturday evening dinner - 6.30 p.m. 31st October 2026 - Commercial Club

Sunday morning BBQ - 8.00 a.m. - Australia Park, South Albury

Sunday evening dinner - 6.30 p.m. 1st November 2026 - Albury Brew House

NOTE; YOU MUST REGISTER TO ATTEND
'Walk-ups' to the event will NOT be accepted.

MODES OF RADIO PROPAGATION

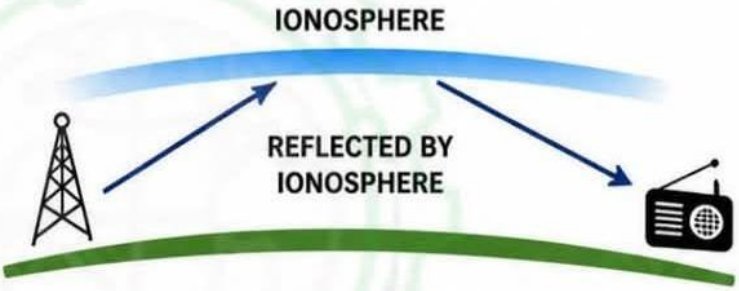
Sights & Sounds

1 GROUND WAVE

Radio waves follow the Earth's surface. Used for AM radio broadcasting.

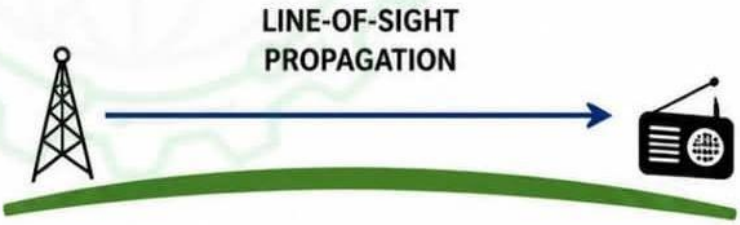
2 SKY WAVE

Waves are reflected by the ionosphere and return to Earth. Used for long distance communication.



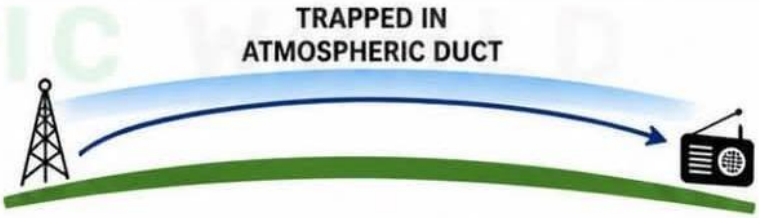
3 SPACE WAVE

Waves travel in a straight line through the atmosphere (line-of-sight). Used for VHF, UHF, and TV signals.



4 TROPOSPHERIC DUCTING

Waves are trapped in a layer of the atmosphere (duct) and travel beyond the horizon.



5 SATELLITE COMMUNICATION

Waves are transmitted to a satellite and back to Earth. Used for global communication.

330-foot 40 ton Tower

This massive tower belonged to Finland Radio Arcala, OH8X, and it was designed by a professional engineering group that designs bridges.

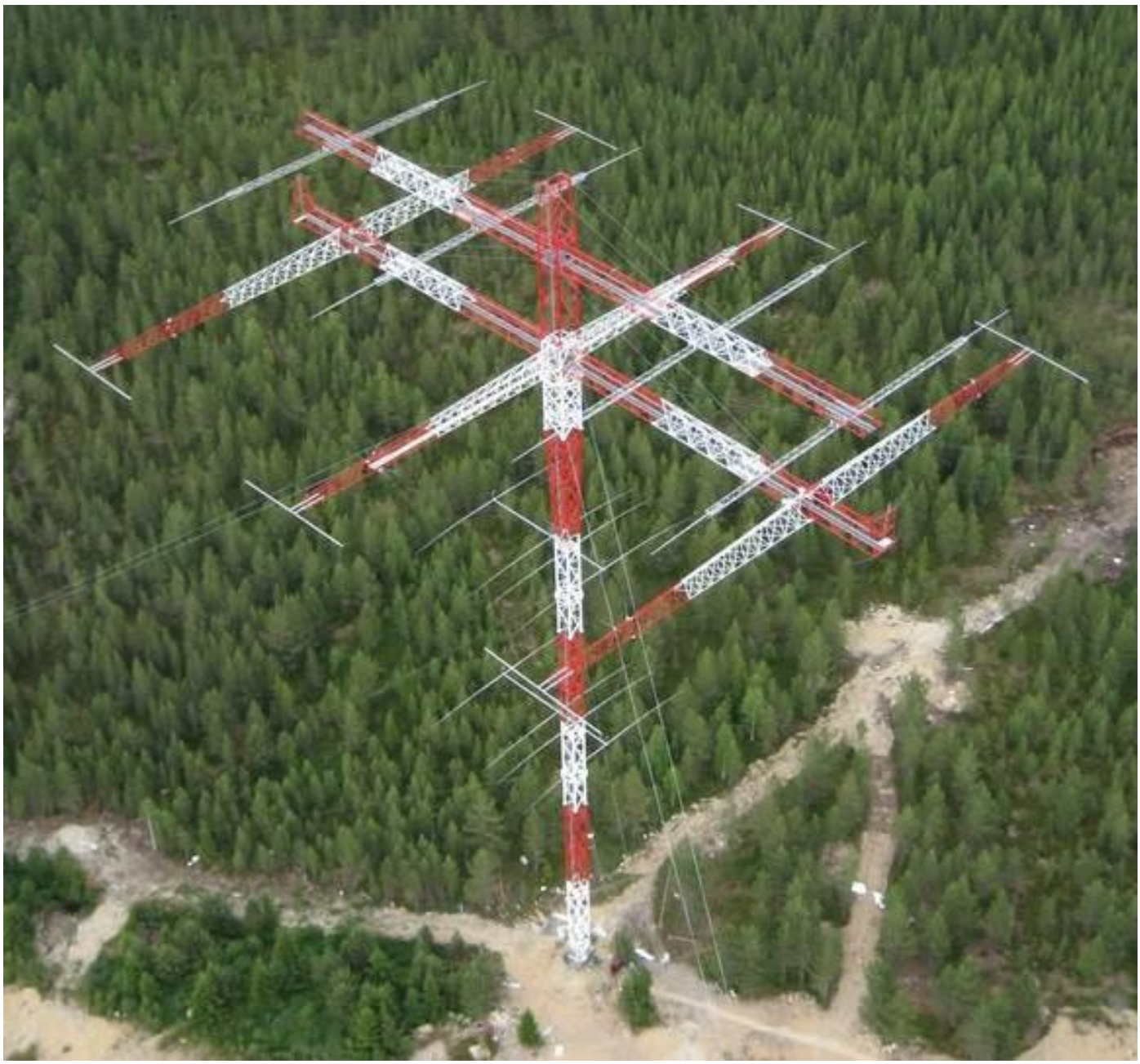
The 330-foot tower weighed 40 tons and was fully rotatable, thanks to a large motor of the type used for turning cargo ship propellers.

The guy wires were three levels of large slip-ring bearings. In addition to two M2 full-size beams for 40 meters, the tower had a three-element antenna for 160 meters and a five-element antenna for 80 meters.

In November 2019, a severe ice storm brought the tower down.

#hamradio #amateurradio

See less



https://www.facebook.com/ARRL.org

TASSIE HAM-E-CON

HACK THE ETHER:

EDUCATION, INGENUITY, CONNECTION

NOVEMBER 7TH - 8TH 2026

HOBART TASMANIA

A weekend of discussion on Amateur Radio mind and culture, system and future.

RADIO & ELECTRONICS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN TASMANIA INC. reast

tassiehamconference@gmail.com for more information

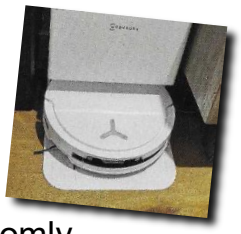
Magazine Reviews

Silicon Chip Review July 2026

P2 Editorial Viewpoint. Nicholas Vinen. Comments on the software and hardware failures and the obsolescence of smartphones.

P12 SOFT ROBOTS. David VK3DSM.Using compliant and soft materials to develop uniquely manoeuvrable machines. With the aid of 3D printing and more readily available suitable products, soft robots for aquatic, aerial and terrestrial use are being developed.

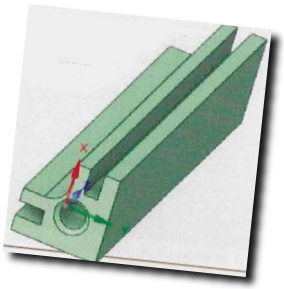
P28 Adjustable Ultrasonic Cleaner. John Clark. A cleaner for small intricate objects, jewellery, tools and devices with fine holes and channels. This will help all those without the use of harsh and/or smelly solvents. This unit features a display to show timer settings and the variable frequency of operation.



P38 Ecovacs DEEBOT T50 Pro Omni Robot Mop & Vacuum. Nicholas Vinen. A review of what is slowly becoming a familiar sight in our homes, the robot vacuum cleaner. Tells the story of opening and setting up the vac and getting it to do the household cleaning.

P47 Circuit Notebook. Generating ±15V from USB 5V with a common mode choke. Driving a mini 3-digit low power LCD module. Randomly timed model traffic lights. Diode Biased capacitive proximity sensor.

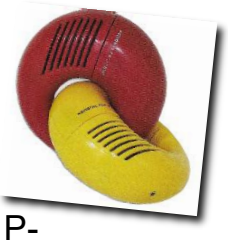
P50 Phenomenal Pinball Machine. Part 2. Phil Prosser. Continues with circuit details, LED driving and power outputs along with the major schematic. Concluding with testing each module and interconnections.



P66 Making Simple & Good-Looking Boxes. Andrew Woodfield. How to go the extra step with 3D printing to make you enclosures that bit more professional looking with a set of corner rails to help connect intersecting panels.

P70 DCC Accessory Decoders. Tim Blythman. Extending the DCC concept, it looks at controlling points and other trackside features. Full construction diagrams and schematics, ready to operate.

P80 I^2C Controller or DCC Accessory Decoders. Tim Blythman. A programmer for DCC devices, to make the job easier.



P84 Altium Designer 26. Tim Blythman. A review of the very powerful schematic and PCB CAD package.

P88 Serviceman's Log. Spare parts shopping list. SLA batteries. Heater Fan Bearings.

P94 Vintage radio. National R-72 "Toot a Loop" radio. Ian Batty. A quirky looking radio receiver featuring two PNP and two NPN BJTs and one P-Ch and one N-Ch Mosfet.

SPRAT Review Summer 2026

P2 Steve, G0FUW, reports that there is some updating being done on some of the clubs older projects and details of the G-QRP Construction Competition 2026.

P3 PW + SPRAT + Receiver Project. Peter G4UMB. A receiver using a DDS VFO and Peter VK3YE 7MHz reflex receiver.

P4 GQRP “Mutz Nutz” loop antenna. Ian GM0SIM. Construction of a wire antenna mixing many types of antenna types and mounting methods.

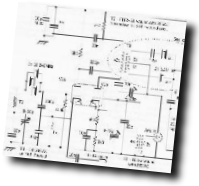
P7 A DIY 2M/70cm Antenna. Peter M0HGC A diamond constructed antenna, useful for 144 and 432 MHz.

P8 TrailDigi – Digital Modes for Android. Chris 2E0FRU. An app for the Android smartphone, that put FT4 and FT8 from the output of your receiver to the screen of your phone using the USB audio system.

P11 Build and Tune a Dipole in Minutes. Mike GK8NXD. A method that can be carried out on the back of an envelope to help make the tuning of your dipole quick and precise.

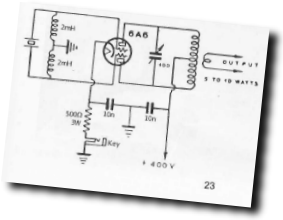
P12 Red Slugs “Do” 40M (with a little help). Ian GM0SIM. Setting up and matching the 15-pound 17foot “red slug” telescopic antenna to between 2M and 20M.

P14 The Langstone SDR TxRx: VHF QRP. Bob G3UDI. Design and construction of an SDR radio for 2M.



P17 On Air Activity Report. Enzo M0KTZ. News on the conventions and field activities during the hot summer period.

P20 DDT7 – a Valved Receiver. Philip G4HOJ. A simple 40M double double-triode CW receiver. The basic schematic and building instructions to get this Rx on air.



P23 The Jones Push Pull Oscillator. Pete N6QW. Construction of a valve crystal oscillator using a 6A6 with 5 to 10 watts output.

P25 A Generic Converter for 6M. John G8ANJ. A simple design converter originally designed to monitor WSPR transmissions. Built originally for an FRG-7.

P27 Valved QRP Reports. Paddy G4MAD. Reports from those keen members to use valve rigs for QRP work.

P31 G2NJ Trophy Presentation. Bill N2CQR and Dean KK4DAS receiving their awards.

P32 Members News. Chris. G4BUE. News from around the globe by members, operating or constructing QRP apparatus.

Ballarat Amateur Radio Group Inc
Registration Number A0006953T
ABN 44 247 200 143
Application for Club Membership

This completed document can be emailed to the Secretary at BARG@BARG.ORG.AU, or brought along to a face to face meeting.

Surname: _____ **Given Names:** _____

Callsign: _____

Are you a financial member of WIA?: **Yes** **No** *(Required for Insurance purposes)*

Partner's Name:_____

Residential Address: _____

Postcode:_____

Postal Address: _____
(If different to above)

Telephone;
*(Work)*_____ (*Home*) _____ (*Mobile*)_____

Email Address_____

Newsletters and Club information will be sent to your email address. If you require Special Club notices and Newsletters to be delivered by Australia Post to your mailing address, this will attract an additional cost of $30 per annum.

If the Club decides to publish a Club Directory, are you willing to have your Given name, callsign and telephone number? Please indicate: **Yes** **No**

By applying for membership I indicate my support of the purposes of the Association and agree to comply with the Association rules and any supplementary rules in effect.

Applicant's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Proposed By: _____ **Callsign:** _____ **Date:** _____

Seconded By: _____ **Callsign:** _____**Date:** _____

--ooOOoo--

Presented to Committee: _____ **Decision:** Accept / Reject

Fee Paid: $_____ **Date:** _____**Receipt No.** (if applicable:)_____

Entered into Membership Register:_____ **Secretary**: _____

BARG Form - Membership Application Form (was V3) Rev PA12.docx 1of 1

BARG Office Bearer Nomination Forms

B.A.R.G. Inc. NOMINATION FORM

Ballarat Amateur Radio Group—Inc # 6953T

DATE: _____

I wish to Nominate _____ CALL: _____

For the position of _____ of BARG Inc.

Nominated by: _____ and _____

Nomination accepted by: (Nominee) _____

B.A.R.G. Inc. NOMINATION FORM

Ballarat Amateur Radio Group—Inc # 6953T

DATE: _____

I wish to Nominate _____ CALL: _____

For the position of _____ of BARG Inc.

Nominated by: _____ and _____

Nomination accepted by: (Nominee) _____